

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1016

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide advance appropriations authority for certain medical care accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 12, 2009

Mr. FILNER (for himself, Mr. MICHAUD, Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. WALZ, Mr. HARE, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. HODES, and Mr. SESTAK) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide advance appropriations authority for certain medical care accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Health Care
5 Budget Reform and Transparency Act of 2009”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) Title 38, United States Code, authorizes the
2 Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish hospital and
3 domiciliary care, medical services, nursing home
4 care, and related services to eligible and enrolled vet-
5 erans, but only to the extent that appropriated re-
6 sources and facilities are available for such purposes.

7 (2) For 19 out of the past 22 fiscal years, ap-
8 propriated funds for medical care were not provided
9 to the Department of Veterans Affairs before the
10 commencement of its new fiscal year, causing the
11 Department great challenges in planning and man-
12 aging care for enrolled veterans, to the detriment of
13 veterans.

14 (3) The cumulative effect of insufficient, late,
15 and unpredictable funding endangers the viability of
16 the system and the specialized health care resources
17 of the Department to maintain and improve the
18 health of the Nation's sick and disabled veterans.

19 (4) Appropriation levels for the health care pro-
20 grams of the Department have too often proven in-
21 sufficient over the past decade, requiring the Sec-
22 retary of Veterans Affairs to ration health care and
23 Congress to approve supplemental appropriations.

24 (5) Providing sufficient, timely, and predictable
25 funding would ensure the Government meets its obli-

1 gation to provide health care to sick and disabled
2 veterans and ensure that all veterans enrolled for
3 care in the Department of Veterans Affairs have
4 ready access to timely and high quality care.

5 (6) Providing sufficient, timely, and predictable
6 funding would allow the Department of Veterans Af-
7 fairs to properly plan for and meet the needs of vet-
8 erans.

9 **SEC. 3. ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR CERTAIN MED-**
10 **ICAL CARE ACCOUNTS OF THE DEPARTMENT**
11 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

12 (a) ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR CERTAIN MED-
13 ICAL CARE ACCOUNTS.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1 of title 38, United
15 States Code, is amended by inserting after section
16 113 the following new section:

17 **“§ 113A. Advance appropriations for certain medical**
18 **care accounts**

19 “(a) IN GENERAL.—For each fiscal year, beginning
20 with fiscal year 2011, discretionary new budget authority
21 provided in an appropriations Act for the appropriations
22 accounts of the Department specified in subsection (b)
23 shall—

24 “(1) be made available for that fiscal year; and

1 “(2) include, for each such appropriations ac-
 2 count, advance discretionary new budget authority
 3 that first becomes available for the first fiscal year
 4 after the budget year.

5 “(b) MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNTS AFFECTED.—The
 6 appropriations accounts subject to subsection (a) of this
 7 section are the following medical care accounts of the ‘Vet-
 8 erans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Af-
 9 fairs’ account:

10 “(1) Medical Services.

11 “(2) Medical Support and Compliance.

12 “(3) Medical Facilities.”.

13 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-
 14 tions at the beginning of such chapter is amended
 15 by inserting after the item relating to section 113
 16 the following new line:

“113A. Advance appropriations for certain medical care accounts.”.

17 **SEC. 4. COMPTROLLER GENERAL STUDY ON ADEQUACY**
 18 **AND ACCURACY OF BASELINE MODEL PRO-**
 19 **JECTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VET-**
 20 **ERANS AFFAIRS FOR HEALTH CARE EXPENDI-**
 21 **TURES.**

22 (a) STUDY OF ADEQUACY AND ACCURACY OF BASE
 23 LINE MODEL PROJECTIONS.—The Comptroller General
 24 shall conduct a study of the adequacy and accuracy of the
 25 budget projections made by the Enrollee Health Care Pro-

1 jection Model (in this section referred to as the “Model”),
2 its equivalent, or other methodologies utilized for the pur-
3 pose of estimating and projecting health care expenditures
4 of the Department of Veterans Affairs with respect to the
5 fiscal year involved and the subsequent four fiscal years.

6 (b) REPORTS.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the date of
8 each year in 2011, 2012, and 2013, on which the
9 President submits the budget request for the next
10 fiscal year under section 1105 of title 31, United
11 States Code, the Comptroller General shall submit to
12 the appropriate committees of Congress and to the
13 Secretary of Veterans Affairs a report.

14 (2) ELEMENTS.—Each report under this para-
15 graph shall include, for the fiscal year concerning
16 the year for which the budget is submitted, the fol-
17 lowing:

18 (A) A statement whether the amount re-
19 quested in the budget of the President for ex-
20 penditures of the Department for health care in
21 such fiscal year is consistent with anticipated
22 expenditures of the Department for health care
23 in such fiscal year as determined utilizing the
24 Model.

25 (B) The basis for such statement.

1 (C) Such additional information as the
2 Comptroller General determines appropriate.

3 (3) AVAILABILITY TO THE PUBLIC.—Each re-
4 port submitted under this subsection shall be made
5 available to the public by the Comptroller General.

6 (4) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS
7 DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “appro-
8 priate committees of Congress” means—

9 (A) the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs,
10 Appropriations, and the Budget of the Senate;
11 and

12 (B) the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs,
13 Appropriations, and the Budget of the House of
14 Representatives.

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